

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, last Friday marked the 39th anniversary of the first United States space exploration mission.

On May 5, 1961 Alan B. Shepard, Jr., became the first American space explorer when he was rocketed 115 miles above the Earth's surface into space.

This feat proved to the world that the United States had the potential to become the winner in this space race.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of us to take a moment to reflect on our past accomplishments and to celebrate how far we have come since that historic flight in 1961. There are enormous possibilities for future progress and for our progress still lying ahead of us.

The continued advancement of our space program, as well as the overall development of new and innovative technologies, demand and require our support.

With the assistance of this Congress, the United States can and will remain a world leader in technological development.

A NATION BANNING GOD

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, the courts started their assault on God by banning school prayer. The courts then banned the public display of the Christmas nativity scene. The courts then banned students from writing papers about Jesus.

Now, if that is not enough to say the devil perhaps made them do it, check this out, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that Ohio's motto with God all things are possible is unconstitutional.

Unbelievable Congress, what is next? Will "In God We Trust" be taken from the House Chamber? "In God We Trust" be removed from our currency? Beam me up, I say these judges make decisions while sitting on their brains.

I yield back the fact that a nation that bans God I believe promotes the devil.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR SENIORS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, too many seniors and disabled people in this country cannot afford the prescription drugs their doctors say they need.

Seniors should never have to choose between food and medicine. This is an important issue that needs a meaningful solution, not the empty rhetoric that we are hearing from the other side.

House Republicans are proposing a plan to offer a fair and responsible drug plan that is affordable, available and voluntary to all seniors and disabled Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it will help folks to get prescription drug coverage at lower costs by creating group buying power without Washington interference or big government-style price controls.

We will reduce the runaway costs of medicine, but not with a Washington-based one-size-fits-all program that kills research and innovation of life-saving cures.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to modernize prescription drug coverage. We should all be working together on this important issue. Let us stop the partisan rhetoric and do the right thing for our seniors.

LET US WORK TO KEEP FRAUD OUT OF THE MEDICARE PROGRAM

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, there are few things more important than taking care of our Nation's seniors. That means keeping the Medicare program healthy and solvent for the 39 million older Americans who depend on it.

Unfortunately, our efforts to improve Medicare will not work if we do not eliminate the waste and abuse that festers in the current programs. In FY 1998, Medicare's fee-for-service program made \$12.6 billion in improper payments. Part of the reason this waste, fraud, and abuse occurred was that the Clinton-Gore administration was careless in monitoring and oversight of Medicare payments. This neglect has created a troughful of Medicare money, and crooks are glad to have it, to eat to their fill.

For example, a New York medical equipment company robbed Medicare of more than \$6 million. A Florida home health agency fraudulently billed Medicare for \$2.2 million.

Let us keep our seniors healthy. Let us work to keep fraud out of the Medicare program.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection and pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution 89, 106th Congress, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies:

Mr. HASTERT of Illinois.

Mr. ARMEY of Texas.

Mr. GEPHARDT of Missouri.

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 4, 2000.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted to Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on May 5, 2000 at 11:15 a.m.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2412.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

MARTHA C. MORRISON,
Deputy Clerk of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that it will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

NORTH SIDE PUMPING DIVISION OF MINIDOKA RECLAMATION PROJECT, IDAHO, AUTHORIZATION INCREASE

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3577) to increase the amount authorized to be appropriated for the north side pumping division of the Minidoka reclamation project, Idaho.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 3577

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. INCREASED AUTHORIZATION FOR MINIDOKA PROJECT, IDAHO.

Section 5 of the Act of September 30, 1950 (chapter 1114; 64 Stat. 1085), authorizing appropriations for the north side pumping division of the Minidoka reclamation project, Idaho, is amended by striking "\$11,395,000" and inserting "\$14,200,000".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 3577.